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No. 6

HORACE ON THE HIGH SEAS¹

'Me, friend of your founts and dances, neither the rout of the armies at Philippi blotted out, nor the accursed tree, nor Palinurus with waves from Sicily.'

So sang the Roman poet Horace², recounting to the Muses the main deadly perils to which he had been exposed.

We are familiar with his participation in the campaign ending at Philippi, and in three other Odes we are told of the tree which fell and narrowly missed cracking its master's pate³. But what of the shipwreck? When and where did it take place? Is there an incident here in his life which can with some probability be restored and assigned to its due place in his biography?

At any rate, Horace at some time or other did some traveling by sea. In a somewhat melancholy mood, when he (quite wrongly) thought that he was destined soon to go down whither Numa and Ancus had already gone⁴, he expressed the wish that lovely Tivoli might be the seat of his old age, the goal for him, wearied as he was with voyaging and journeying and soldiering⁵. Yet if we search the records of his life, full as they are comparatively for a man of purely literary activities, we find that we can identify his voyages only by inference.

Quintus Horatius Flaccus was born at Venusia, where Apulia throws a little wedge between Campania and Lucania⁶, and there he spent his childhood until his father, an honest freedman, became dissatisfied with the local School and preferred to have his son flogged by a better teacher in better surroundings⁷. The trip to Rome was doubtless made by land, over the Via Appia or perhaps in part by the Via Latina. We next hear of Quintus in Athens, where he was to learn to seek the truth and to get the desire to separate the straight from the crooked⁸, jesting phrases by which he designates the precepts of philosophy. On the way to Athens he must have had his first sea-voyage; he certainly crossed the Adriatic by ship. Was it the short and direct crossing from Brundisium to Dyrrachium, or did he take a longer course, from Ostia to the Piraeus? We cannot say; but we can infer that he took the shorter one, if it was possible. Sea-travel was in those days fully as

unsafe from storms as it was unsafe in the days—just past—of mines and submarines.

After a year or two amidst the groves of Academus, Horace entered a brief military career in the army of Brutus and Cassius, where—*mirabile dictu*—he was made a tribune of the soldiers, quasi-colonel of a regiment. It is supposed that during his service he visited some of the islands of the Aegean and certain cities of the nearby Asiatic coast, but of this there is no direct evidence. If the supposition be valid, then Horace made some voyages in these waters; but we must leave this aside as quite uncertain.

The defeat at Philippi left our hero in the position of an outlawed rebel, defeated and fugitive; yet we next find him in Rome as a clerk in the treasury department, writing verse in his spare time⁹. Obviously he took advantage of the amnesty granted by Octavian, and returned under its protection; and on the way back to Rome he must again have voyaged across the Adriatic. It was, I think, an unpleasant experience.

Horace, you know, did like the country. His little Sabine farm¹⁰ is ever rousing his enthusiastic praise: but he had no joy in buffeting the elements, even on land. He would not have braved the gusts of wind and the swirl of rain on a hike from Rome to Tivoli or to his farm. He never climbed Soracte through the snowdrifts. No, no! on such a day a rousing fire upon the hearth would warm his outer man, and a jar marked with the label of a good old brand would pour out wine to warm his inner man¹¹. A river-flood one might usually avoid, so that, while it was unpleasant, it did not excite in Horace a positive repulsion of disgust and panic fear¹²; there was to him something of majesty and splendor in the roaring of the Aufidus, his boyhood's familiar stream¹³.

The milder aspects of the water-deities delighted him. The Bandusian Fount, gushing out under an overhanging ilex-tree, and prattling down the rocks into the glassy pool beneath, has immortalized its poet, even as he has made it a joy forever¹⁴; and, where a brook rippled beneath the trees, he was wont to stretch himself out in the shade upon the turf after dining and doze in dreamy contentment¹⁵.

But, when Horace went to the seaside in the winter, to escape the rigors of his farm in the mountains and

¹This paper was read at the Thirteenth Annual Meeting of The Classical Association of the Atlantic States, at Haverford College, April 4, 1919.

²Carm. 3.4.25-28. The translations here presented are frequently mere paraphrases, intended to bring out the point for which they are quoted. A series of citations is often meant to be illustrative rather than exhaustive.

³Carm. 2.13, 2.17.27-32, 3.8.1-16. ⁴Epp. 1.6.27.

⁵Carm. 2.6.5-8.

⁶Serm. 1.6.71-78. Compare Epp. 2.1.70-71.

⁷Epp. 2.2.41-45.

⁸Epp. 2.2.49-52. ¹⁰Epp. 1.16.1-16; etc.

⁹Carm. 1.9; Epop. 1.3; Serm. 2.3.10, 2.6.25-26.

¹¹Carm. 1.2.13-20, 1.31.7-8, 3.29.33-41, 4.2.5-8, 4.14.25-28;

Serm. 1.1.54-60, 1.10.62, 2.3.242.

¹²Carm. 3.30.10-14, 4.9.1-4, 4.14.25-28; Serm. 1.1.51-60.

¹³Carm. 3.13.

¹⁴Carm. 1.1.18-22, 1.26.6-8, 2.3.6-12, 3.11.13-20; Epp. 1.10.20-

²¹, 1.14.35.

the discomforts of Rome, where fuel for heating was expensive, he went there not to walk in the brisk invigorating air, nor to enjoy the view out over the blue waters, nor to watch the breakers dash upon the shore in times of storm, but to curl up in a sunny nook and read¹⁶. So his queries to a friend upon the relative merits of the seaside resorts, Velia and Salernum, were about the weather and the people, the condition of the roads leading to the places, the local wine and water, the meats, the fish, and the shellfish¹⁷. The loveliest place in all Italy, to Horace's eyes, next to Tivoli with its streams and groves and orchards¹⁸, was Tarentum, which had the merits of a long spring season and a warm winter, and splendid honey, olives, and wine, rivaling the best products of Italy and Greece¹⁹; he says nothing of its lovely outlook over the Mediterranean.

Sea-bathing and swimming seem foreign to Horace's mode of thought; perhaps they were at best the ultimate resource in case of shipwreck. As an exercise, swimming was an art to be cultivated in a nice river or bathing-establishment, and there it was really commendable, like hunting and the practice of warlike weapons, sports honorable for true Romans²⁰.

But the sea itself was to Horace, as well as to the ancients in general, a source of dread²¹. Though it did not always rage, and the bright constellation of Castor and Pollux might bring good weather after the storm, still it was treacherous, with winds that changed and waves that rose unexpectedly, tossing and battering the ships, and wrecking them in mid-sea or on rocky shores, where the wretched sailors were dashed to their death²².

It is true that some of the passages bear the earmarks of conventionality.

'About his chest were oak and triple mail of bronze who first dared trust to the savage sea his fragile bark. . . . 'Twas all in vain that God with forethought tore apart the lands with the separative Ocean, if, none the less, defiant craft bound o'er the inviolable sea. Bold to endure all toils, mankind doth rush straight on to do forbidden sacrilege²³.

The whole passage is obviously taken from the Greek; so also, though to a slighter degree, the Ode to the Ship of State²⁴, wherein Horace expresses his anxieties for Rome when civil war between Octavian and Antony was threatening.

But much of the dread of the sea is with Horace no mere conventionality; it is a real feeling, though the demonstration of this is obtainable only by living one's own self into the works of our poet, until one can feel with him what he intended to convey. Again and again Horace expresses his contentment with an obscure lot, devoid of the luxuries which the wealthy traders

may obtain, who set out with their well-stocked ships in early spring, before the weather is settled, determined to have the first and most profitable business on the shores of the Euxine, or to go to India or to the Atlantic, even thrice or four times in a single year, returning unscathed perhaps, but tossed by storms; or, if they lose their ships, they forthwith provide themselves another and set out again to repair their shattered fortunes—no hardships, no dangers keep them from the pursuit of wealth²⁵. Then, in winter, the sea was closed to navigation, and the trader homeward bound might be obliged to lie over in a foreign port, while his mother pined away or his sweetheart forgot him²⁶. The fisherman, too, who sweeps up the fishes from the wintry sea, is another daring individual in Horace's eyes²⁷.

We find in Horace's writings no sense of the power of man to overcome the elements. He might himself sail safe only if he admitted to his craft no sinful comrade, and had besides the protection of the Muses or of Castor and his twin²⁸. Fervent prayers come from his lips when a dear friend such as Vergil is about to make a voyage, and equally fervent wishes for a wreck when one whom he dislikes sets sail²⁹. He portrays the heroic Teucer, leaving Salamis, as bidding his comrades make merry to-day, for on the morrow they were again to test the mighty sea; no more than this dared he say, though sustained by Apollo's prophecy of a happy issue of his wanderings³⁰. The waves dash upon the shore, and eat away the rocks³¹; the pleasure which one gets in viewing the billows from the land lies in the reflexion that one is in fact safe on the land³². Those millionaires who drive out stone dikes into the water as foundations for their villas are patently overstepping the restrictions divinely set³³. On the sea, all men are equal: the poor man in his hired skiff and the rich man in his private yacht become equally seasick³⁴.

So, after all, in Horace's eyes, water was not a very desirable and attractive article, except as a dilutent for his wine³⁵:

'The god has made all undertakings hard for water-drinkers, and only through wine do biting worries flee away. Who, when he's drained the cups, then prates of the heavy toils of war, or of narrowness of means'³⁶? And if our poet fussed about the quality of the water at Forum Appii on his journey to Brundisium, or about its scantiness at the place whose name would not go into hexameter verse, and at Canusium³⁷, it was not because he wished to drink it straight. Still, he did at one time get profit from a cold-water régime when he was ill; but this treatment was external³⁸.

Now, after this excursus upon Horace's dislike for water, let us return to the theme of a possible shipwreck

¹⁶Epp. 1.7.10-13. Compare 1.20.24.

¹⁷Epp. 1.15.1-25.

¹⁸Carm. 1.7.10-14, 2.6.5-8, 4.3.10-12.

¹⁹Carm. 2.6.9-24.

²⁰Carm. 1.1.23-28, 1.8.2-12; Serm. 2.1.7-9, 2.2.9-15; Epp. 1.6.56-61, 1.18.44-57, 2.3.161-162.

²¹Carm. 1.1.11-18, 1.31.9-15, 2.13.14-16, 2.16.1-4, 3.1.25-28, 3.24.36-41; Serm. 1.1.6, 20-30, 38-40; Epp. 1.1.45-48, 1.6.31-35, 1.16.71.

²²Carm. 3.7.1-8, 4.5.9-16.

²³Catullus' feeling for the sea was very different from Horace's; but we cannot discuss this subject here.

²⁴Serm. 2.2.16-17, 2.3.23.5.

²⁵Carm. 1.3.9-36, 1.5.5-12, 1.7.15-17, 1.12.27-32, 1.16.10, 1.22.5,

²⁶Carm. 1.7.21-32.

1.32.7-8, 2.6.3-4, 2.6.1-4, 2.10.1-4, 2.3-24, 3.3.37-39, 4.4.43-44.

²⁷Epp. 1.11.4-6, 2.18.20-22, 3.17.9-12.

²⁸Epp. 1.1.9-10, 1.3.9-55.

²⁹Carm. 1.11.18-26.

³⁰Carm. 1.3.9-36. Compare Epp. 16.37-60.

³¹Carm. 1.18.3-5.

³¹Carm. 1.14.

³²Epp. 1.15.1-9.

in which he participated. I would first call your attention to that twenty-eighth Ode of the first book, which so many editors divide, quite wrongly, into two poems. The poet apostrophizes Archytas, the philosopher and scientist of Tarentum, saying that even he lies dead and buried, as do other great worthies of the past, some highly favored by the gods.

'Though the soul escapes death, still one dark night awaits all, and all must once tread the way of death. Some the Furies give as a show to savage Mars, and others, voyaging, fall victims to the greedy sea; the burials of old and young crowd thick one on the other, stern Prosperina lets none escape. Me as well did Notus, setting Orion's swift companion, overwhelm in Illyrian waters. But do thou, sailor passing by, begrudge not churlishly to give a handful of the shifting sand to my unburied corpse; do this, I beg, and then, whate'er the threats that Eurus make against the Hesperian waves, I pray that thou be safe how'er Venusia's woods be lashed, and that much precious merchandise become thine own from those from whom it can, from kindly Jove and from Neptune, holy Tarentum's guardian. Dost fail to see that if thou pass me by thou doest a wrong that will one day recoil upon thy children's guiltless heads? And e'en perchance due penalty and overwhelming retribution may lie in wait for thee thyself; if I be left unheeded, then my imprecations on thee will not fail of answer, and no atonement offerings will set thee free. Though thou be hastening, 'twill not detain thee long; thrice cast the dust upon me, then speed on!'

I would now attempt to interpret the setting of this Ode, as I see it. Horace represents himself as shipwrecked, and his lifeless body cast upon the shore. His spirit bewails the inevitability of death, addressing Archytas, whose tomb was not far distant from the place; then, just as he speaks explicitly of his own fate, he sees a mariner sailing along by the shore, and appeals to him to cast upon the body the three handfuls of earth which constituted formal burial, adding prayers of gratitude in anticipation of the favor, then changing to despairing hints of retribution and of curses as the boat passes by without stopping. Now as for the location: the *litus Matinum*³⁹ where, according to Horace, Archytas lay buried, is the shore near Matinus, a spur of Garganus, that peculiar projection on the East coast of Italy. The Illyrian waters⁴⁰ which overwhelmed him are those of the Adriatic. The Hesperian waves⁴¹ are those on the Italian coast. The allusion to the woods of Venusia⁴² is especially appropriate if the drowned seafarer is Horace himself. Tarentum⁴³ is thought of since it was the home of Archytas. The scene therefore of the disaster is not far from Matinus on the South side of the Garganus peninsula.

It is to be noted in support of this that Horace nowhere else (save once) uses the first person pronoun of any other than himself, unless quotation of another's words is explicitly indicated, or the poem is cast in dialogue form⁴⁴; the one exception is the Carmen Saeculare, and there the reason is obvious. At times,

³⁹Carm. 1.28.3.

⁴⁰Carm. 1.28.26 (= 28.ii.6).

⁴¹Carm. 1.28.29 (= 28.ii.9).

⁴²Carm. 3.9; Epod. 17; Serm. 2.1, 3-5, 7-8.

⁴³Carm. 1.28.22 (= 28.ii.2).

⁴⁴Ib.

it is true, Horace puts himself in a fictitious position and speaks in that character; but this only justifies us still further in regarding the drowned seafarer, the *me quoque* of Carmina 1.28, as being in reality Horace himself.

Of course, it might be urged that Horace would not have represented himself as dead, since that representation would be an ill-omened one, likely to bring about a realization of the fancied scene. But, whatever superstitious prejudices the ancients had along these lines—and they undoubtedly had them—, Horace does elsewhere speak of himself in a similar strain. Two such passages may here be quoted. After singing of the beauties of Tarentum, he says to his friend,

'That place and its happy hills call thee, and me; there wilt thou with due tear besprinkle the yet warm ashes of thy poet friend'⁴⁵.

He has here a vision of his body already burned upon the pyre: surely ill-omened enough. And again he says, 'The tree that toppled on my skull had swept me off, unless . . .'⁴⁶, but he used the indicative, representing the fatality as actual, before he introduced the mitigating *nisi*. The evil omen of the picture in Carmina 1.28 can hardly be advanced as telling against my interpretation.

There is a little difficulty in the mention of the special winds Notus⁴⁷ and Eurus⁴⁸. It is Notus which destroyed the voyager; and Notus was a South wind. A ship in the Adriatic, if caught by Notus, would normally be driven upon the rugged coast of Illyria; but as that was made up mainly of mountains descending precipitously to the water's edge, any captain driven before the wind would strive to work his way westward, toward Italy, though the Italian coast also was deficient in good harbors. Now the mention of Eurus, the Southeast wind, suggests that Notus may not have been the only agent in the wreck, but that Eurus followed by Notus, or Notus followed by Eurus, may have caused the damage. Yet we cannot expect the poet to employ scientific accuracy in naming the winds which caused the wreck; all that we can expect is that he should name a storm wind.

I wish therefore to make the conjecture that Horace, on his return voyage from Greece after the battle of Philippi and the amnesty of Octavian, was wrecked in the neighborhood of the Garganus peninsula, and narrowly escaped with his life. His emotions on the occasion, when he was expecting every moment to be drowned, he afterwards garbed in this poetic form. Now perhaps—or shall I say surely?—this is a bold thesis to set up. Can it be supported by other evidence?

It might be observed that of Horace's three narrow escapes from death, that from the falling tree is mentioned only four times⁴⁹, and his part in the battle of Philippi not so frequently as one might imagine. This experience he mentions in the passage which at the

⁴⁵Carm. 2.6.21-24.

⁴⁶Carm. 1.28.22 (= 28.ii.2).

⁴⁷Carm. 2.17.27-28.

⁴⁸Carm. 1.28.25 (= 28.ii.5).

⁴⁹Carm. 2.1.3, 2.17.27-32, 3.4.27, 3.8.1-10.

outset I took as my text⁵⁰; in two other passages, at some length⁵¹; in another, where he mentions simply his weariness of soldiering⁵²; and in a fifth, where he mentions that he had been a tribune, and that some persons had felt quite properly that he did not deserve so high a military rank⁵³. Surely not a very constant harping upon what must have an intensely thrilling series of experiences!

Now, when we look for other allusions to Horace's escape from drowning, in addition to the three which have already been discussed⁵⁴, we do find them, though they are in somewhat veiled language. When Galatea is about to start upon a voyage, he prays that fair omens attend her; yet adds,

'But thou seest with what disquietude the setting Orion quivers. I from my own experience have learned what the black bosom of the Adriatic means, and what wrong the wind Iapyx, clearing though he be, commits'.

This can mean only that Horace says that he personally has been in peril of the sea while voyaging upon the Adriatic; and we may note that here, as in *Carmina* 1.28, he refers to setting Orion—here *pronus*, there *devenus*. But the allusion to Iapyx as the wind active in the matter shows that we cannot lay much stress on the mention of Notus and Eurus in the other Ode; for Iapyx is the West-northwest wind.

Further, we may note that Horace always speaks of the Adriatic as a rough and stormy sea, except in one passage, where he mentions it as the scene of the Battle of Actium⁵⁵; witness the two passages already discussed⁵⁶, and the following:

'... the rage of Notus, than whom there is no greater master of the Adriatic, whether he will stir up or smooth the waters'⁵⁷.

'... destroy my slanderous verses in any way thou wilt; feed them to the fire, or cast them into the Adriatic sea'⁵⁸.

'E'en me myself, when a love of better station sought me, did Myrtale—now freed, but once a slave—hold fast in pleasing fetters, Myrtale more violent of mood than the billows of the Adriatic as they hollow out Calabria's curving bays'⁵⁹.

'Quintius Hirpinus, forbear to seek what plans the warlike Spaniard makes, and the Scythian, parted from us by the interposing of the Adriatic.'

'In vain shall we avoid the blood-stained God of War, and hoarse-voiced Adriatic's crashing breakers'; none may escape death⁶⁰.

'The righteous man who is firm in his intent neither the base orders of an inflamed mob, nor the expression of the threatening tyrant shakes from his fixed determination, nor Auster, the restless Adriatic's boisterous lord, nor Jove's great hand, wielding the thunderbolt; although the world be shattered and fall upon his head, its downfall, smiting him, will leave him unafraid'⁶¹.

'Though he is fairer than a star, and thou are lighter than cork and hotter of temper than the vicious Adriatic, with thee I'd love to live, with thee I'd gladly die'⁶².

⁵⁰Carm. 3.4.25-26.
⁵¹Carm. 2.6.7-8.
⁵²Carm. 3.4.25-28, 2.6.7, 1.28.
⁵³Epp. 1.18.63.
⁵⁴Carm. 1.3.14-16.
⁵⁵Carm. 1.33.13-16.
⁵⁶Carm. 3.14.13-14.
⁵⁷Carm. 3.9.21-24.

⁵⁰Carm. 2.7.1-16; Epp. 2.2.46-52.
⁵¹Serm. 1.6.48-50.
⁵²Carm. 3.27.16-20.
⁵³Carm. 1.28, 3.27.17-20.
⁵⁴Carm. 1.16.2-4.
⁵⁵Carm. 2.11.1-4.
⁵⁶Carm. 3.3.1-8.

Horace's attitude toward the Adriatic is, therefore, entirely uniform; but you may be wondering why, if Horace was wrecked on the Adriatic coast of Italy, he actually said, in the passage first quoted in this paper⁶³, that it was Palinurus with its waves from Sicily which failed, by a narrow margin, to destroy him. For Palinurus is the well-known promontory on the West coast of Lucania, where Aeneas's pilot swam ashore only to be murdered by the savage natives. The answer is that Palinurus was the only Italian promontory of literary associations as to loss of life in shipwreck; there was no other cape whose name would automatically suggest to the mind the idea which Horace wished instantaneously to evoke. And the poet must not be bound too closely to facts.

Possibly, also, a bit of veiled evidence, worthless by itself, but yielding its mite to the cumulative whole, may be obtained from the Ode to Pyrrha⁶⁴. Horace asks the flirtatious maiden what youth is now wooing her—ah, how he will rue his infatuation when he discovers how lightly she will cast him off for another; he, Horace, has luckily escaped unscathed. This last idea he thus expresses:

'As for me, the temple wall with votive painting shows that I have dedicated my dripping garments to the mighty sea-divinity'.

It was a custom for one in danger of losing his life in a shipwreck to vow to a god, most often to Neptune, some gift as a thank-offering in event of his escape. Along with this gift he might present a painting of the scene, with the ship sinking and himself being helped to the shore by the active intervention of the god. The words *potenti maris deo* may mean not merely 'to the mighty god of the sea', Neptune, but 'to the mighty goddess of the sea', Venus, who was fabled to have sprung from the foam of the sea; the passage is intended to convey the idea that Horace has escaped disaster in love, and that in thankfulness he has figuratively made a dedication to the goddess of love for her kindness in allowing him to escape. Yet, what is in point for my argument, such a phrasing of the idea might most naturally come to one who had passed through the experience of marine shipwreck and had escaped and made suitable votive offerings.

The same idea recurs in a later Ode⁶⁵, but in attenuated form:

'Till recently I was well fitted for the wars, and earned some fame in service; now my arms and lyre, their warlike duties done, shall hang upon this wall which guards the left-hand side of sea-born Venus's statue'.

At any rate, after Horace was once safe back in Italy in 41 B. C., he seems never again to have set foot on any craft more dangerous than a canal-boat. That was, of course, an experience not without its little thrills. It was on the journey to Brundisium; Horace and his companion had reached Forum Appii, whence they intended to make a night trip on the canal as far as

⁶³Carm. 3.4.25-28.
⁶⁴Carm. 1.5

⁶⁵Carm. 3.26.1-6.

Feronia, much as we Philadelphians, when we go to Boston, take the steamer from New York to Fall River. At Forum Appii, says Horace,

'I declared war on my hunger, for the water was horrible, and I waited in no unruffled frame of mind for my feasting fellow-travelers. And now night was making ready to draw the shadows over the lands and to sprinkle the constellations on the sky; then the slave-boys began to wrangle with the boatmen, and the boatmen with the slave-boys: "Lay alongside here! You're taking on too many—the boat is overloaded! That's quite enough!". While the fare was being taken up and the mule was being harnessed, a full hour passed. The gnats and frogs—swamp nuisances—drove sleep away, while two near-wine soaks, a boatman and a traveler, outsang each other to the girl they'd left behind them. At last the weary traveler dropped off to sleep; the lazy boatman tied the mule's traces to a rock and let it out to graze, then flung himself down on his back and snored. And now the day was dawning, when we saw that the boat was not in motion; nor did it start until one choleric passenger jumped out upon the bank and with a willow cudgel trimmed the mule's and boatman's—head and back. 'Twas nine o'clock, or somewhat later, when we landed at Feronia'*. S

Yet despite his pontophobia—I must invent a word, since it cannot be called hydrophobia—Horace did once after this offer to go to sea. When Octavian was making ready for the final conflict with Antony, Horace thought that Maecenas, his patron, was intending to take an active part in the campaign, which, you will remember, was a naval one, and asks, if his patron goes, 'What will become of me, who find life pleasant only if thou live, a burden otherwise? Shall I, upon thy bidding, lead a life of leisure that is not sweet but in thy company, or shall I bear this toil of war with a spirit that befits not weakling men? I'll bear it, and stout-heartedly will follow thee through Alpine ridges and forbidding Caucasus, or to the farthest Western bay. Wouldest ask, how by my toil I may aid thine, I, no man of war and none too strong? If I attend thee, then the dread in which I am will be decreased; but separation strengthens fear. . . . Gladly will I serve through this and every war to win thy gratitude.'

and not that Maecenas may enrich him, for 'thy generosity has already enriched me enough and more'*'. But all through the poem we feel that Horace is shaking in his shoes from terror that his offer may be accepted, though he might have realized that on a serious fighting campaign he would have been an encumbrance rather than a help. One may note that he did not give the only reasonable excuse for his presence amid the fighting, namely the immortalization in verse of heroic exploits performed under his eyes.

Pray do not think that I am speaking in depreciation of good old Horace; we may poke a little fun at our friends' follies and foibles, and not give offense, if our friendship is close enough. It is because I feel, rightly or wrongly, such a sense of intimacy with our poet through much reading of his writings, that I feel privileged, again rightly or wrongly, to speak of him with a little levity which is meant only in a kindly spirit. Horace himself would have been the last to take

himself too seriously, or to think of himself as cast in an heroic mold. So we may say of him that he did not like water either in the sea or out of it, unless it was murmuring a lullaby in a prattling brook or had been poured into an alcoholic beverage; and that with this attitude a narrow escape from drowning had something to do. I place this experience on the East coast of Italy, as he was returning under Octavian's amnesty in 41 B. C., and support this view by the passages already cited⁷⁰.

'Many brave men lived and died before Agamemnon; but they are all buried in a long night of oblivion unwept and unknown, because they lack a sacred bard'⁷¹.

So, if Horace chose not to speak more explicitly of his personal adventures, they remain unknown, unless conjecture and imagination help us restore the picture. It is not merely the future which the god wittingly veils in dark and foggy night, and laughs if man *ultra fas trepidat*⁷². The past as well he veils in dark and foggy night; perhaps, too, he laughs if, in his conjecturing, man *ultra fas audet*.

UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA.

ROLAND G. KENT.

REVIEWS

The Dramatic Values in Plautus. University of Pennsylvania Dissertation. By Wilton Wallace Blancké. Geneva, New York: Press of W. F. Humphrey (1918). Pp. 69.

At the Sixth Annual Meeting of The Classical Association of the Atlantic States, held at Philadelphia, May, 1912, Dr. Blancké presented a paper which he called Plautus as an Acting Dramatist. The paper was published in THE CLASSICAL WEEKLY 6.10-13, 18-20. The material seemed so useful and helpful that the reviewer included the article in the collateral reading of a class in Latin Comedy. It certainly proved an aid in securing more sympathetic and spirited translations.

The seedling has now matured into an inaugural. Dr. Blancké sets out to establish (17) that Plautus regarded his adapted dramas merely as a rack on which to hang witticisms, merely as a medium for laugh-provoking sallies and situations.

His special equipment consists of a sensitive funnybone and unenforced courses in farce, burlesque and vaudeville, in addition to those of the Graduate School.

Dr. Blancké's views can be most succinctly and satisfactorily indicated by his catalogues on page 34. In the

Machinery characteristic <also> of the lower types of modern drama—farce, low comedy, musical comedy, burlesque shows, vaudeville and the like,

he notes:

A. Devices self-evident from the text. 1. Bombast and mock-heroics. 2. Horse-play and slap-sticks. 3. Burlesque, farce and extravagance of situation and

⁷⁰Especially Carm. 3.4.25-28, 2.6.5-8, 3.27.17-20, 1.5.12-16; and the passages referring to the Adriatic.

⁷¹Carm. 4.9.25-28.

⁷²Carm. 3.29.29-32.

dialogue. B. Devices absurd and inexplicable unless interpreted in a broad farcical spirit. 1. The running slave¹. 2. Wilful blindness. 3. Adventitious entrance.

He then lists

evidences of loose composition which prove disregard of technique and hence indicate that entertainment was the sole aim. A. Solo speeches and passages. 1. Asides and soliloquies. 2. Lengthy monodies, monologues and episodical specialties. 3. Direct address to the audience². B. Inconsistencies and carelessness of composition. 1. Pointless badinage and padded scenes. 2. Inconsistencies of character and situation. 3. Looseness of dramatic construction. 4. Roman admixture and topical allusions³. 5. Jokes on the dramatic machinery⁴. 6. Use of stock plots and characters.

These catalogues were made on the basis of passages which are either quoted or cited. From a mass of evidence it is deduced that the mission of Plautus was laugh-producing; that his plays were professedly mere entertainment, and consciously satire, and that by placing them low in the dramatic scale we obviate the necessity of explaining unrealities and absurdities. The conclusions seem so sound that the reviewer does not care to take issue with them in general, although he would not place well-constructed plays like the *Captivi* and the *Rudens* in the 'rake' class. As great a critic as Lessing calls the *Captivi* 'the best comedy ever put on the stage'.

Plautus was competing with a drama in which "merry quip and banter were more conspicuous than plot". A noisy, turbulent, largely illiterate open-air gathering out for a holiday is not going to find amusement in a high form of dramatic art. From the prologue to the *Poenulus* we can get some idea of the confusion during the performance. The bawling of infants in arms, the rushing of attendants for refreshments, and the ejecting of slaves from seats unpaid for were no doubt great sources of disturbance. Time after time, in the Prologues, Plautus felt constrained to ask for silence and attention on the part of the spectators⁵. No doubt it was continued provocation that caused him to say in *Miles Gloriosus* 81-82:

Qui autem auscultare nolet, exsurgat foras
ut sit ubi sedeat ille qui auscultare volt.

That diversion was the aim of Plautus is indicated by the admonition, *eccite ex animo curam* (*Cas.* 23). No doubt it required but little effort for him to cater to the spectators, since his own temperament probably coincided very largely with theirs. It was not mere accident that refined Terence rather than boisterous Plautus saw the theater deserted for the rival attraction of rope-dancing.

Although it is clear that Plautus was actuated primarily by a desire to amuse, it is unfair to imply that

¹A valuable collection of material which overlaps in some particulars that of Dr. Blancké has been made by C. Knapp, References in Plautus to Plays, Players and Playwrights, *Classical Philology*, 14, 35-55 (January, 1919). On the slave out of breath, see 48-49.

²Cf. Knapp, 46-48.

³Cf. Knapp, 51-52.

⁴Cf. Knapp, 48-50.

⁵Cf. Knapp, *Classical Philology* 14, 47, 55, Art and Archaeology 1, 202-204.

he had no other mission. The occasional coarseness of his plays was a great improvement on the obscenity and lewdness that must have characterized the native Italian farce and burlesque. He doubtless did elevate the stage and consciously work to that end. That at times he did feel the restraint placed upon him by the character of his audience, is shown by the warning in the prologue of the *Captivi* that the play was not going to be 'spicy'.

Neque spurcidici insunt versus inmemorabiles:
hic neque periurus lenost nec meretrix mala.

To the list of cogs in Plautus's dramatic machinery, one would like to add verbal acrobatics, an expression in keeping with Dr. Blancké's style of nomenclature. Linguistic cleverness is, however, not so much an independent cog as a lubricant for all the cogs. It makes them go. Puns, plays, quips, and repartee abound everywhere and keep the spectators on the *qui vive*. Any one who has seen fakers and nostrum sellers present little open-air skits in the Trastevere preparatory to hawking their wares is brought to realize how the Italian temperament responds to verbal play and witticisms. Once the laughter has been set in motion the quality of the jokes may deteriorate in much the same manner that cheaper wine may be served after the appetite has become a little dull. He would be a rash man who would deny that there is some cheap wit in Plautus.

Another lubricant, to which much to the reviewer's satisfaction, Dr. Blancké devotes more attention (see pages 23-26) than do the annotated editions of the plays of Plautus is gesture⁶. The reviewer was fortunate enough to see a presentation of *La Fanciulla del West* in the opera house at Palermo. He is firmly convinced that the violent twisting and squirming of the protagonist, in a scene in which he had his hands tied behind his back, were due to a deep-seated impulse to use his hands to aid his thought. On another occasion the reviewer saw (he was going to say *heard*) a spirited monologue in gestures which lasted fully two minutes. The Italians very frequently end sentences with *ma*, 'but', which causes one writer to say that they can express any idea with a *ma*. This is by no means true. They continue the thought with a shrug of the shoulders, with facial play and with gesticulation. As Tasso puts it (4,85):

E ciò che lingua esprimer ben non puote,
Muta eloquenza ne' suoi gesti espresse.

It is narrated that

King Ferdinand returning to Naples after the revolt of 1821, and finding that the boisterous multitude would not allow his voice to be heard, resorted successfully to a royal address in signs, giving reproaches, threats,

⁶To the bibliography of the Terentian MSS. miniatures should be added (26) references to Karl E. Weston, *The Illustrated Terence Manuscripts*, *Harvard Studies* 14, 37-54, which is accompanied by 92 plates; and to Professor Catharine Saunders's dissertation, *Costume in Roman Comedy* (*Columbia University Press*, 1909). See *THE CLASSICAL WEEKLY* 3, 178-180. The reader would likewise be thankful for a reference to the 151 reproductions of Latin manuscript 7899 issued by the *Département des Manuscrits, Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris*.

admonitions, pardon, and dismissal to the entire satisfaction of the assembled lazzaroni⁷.

The use of gesture was just as prevalent in antiquity. Everyone is familiar with the story told by Macrobius (3.14.12) of the tilts between Roscius and Cicero, in which the actor employing gesture and the orator using words vied with each other to see which could express more frequently the same thought. As Cicero says (De Oratore 3.222), *est actio quasi sermo corporis*. The face is the *sermo tacitus mentis* (Cicero, In Pis. 1.1), and facial expression is often a substitute for words (*est saepe pro omnibus verbis*, Quintilian 11.3.72). The right hand is the *divinae eloquentiae ministra* (Seneca, Suasoriae 6.19).

There was, then, a language of gestures, as there was of words, and the letters that spelled the ideas were fingers, hands, arms, eyes, facial muscles, in fact the whole body. The Romans did in fact many times describe gesture language in the same terms as verbal talk⁸.

One must remember too that gesture made a greater appeal in proportion to the illiteracy of the audience. "Action is eloquence and the eyes of the ignorant more learned than the ears" (Coriolanus, 3.2.76-77).

A twentieth-century Jorio⁹ equipped with a camera and a thorough knowledge of ancient references to gestures¹⁰ could perform a valuable service for the Classics by making an illustrated study of Italian gestures, and comparing them with those of the ancients.

Dr. Blancké was so engrossed in the larger aspects of his problem that at times he overlooked some obvious points of translation. One does not need to change the meaning in order to get translations that go. *Num quisquam adire ad ostium dignum arbitratur*, Merc. 132 ('Won't some one condescend to come to the door?'), is changed to "Isn't anybody supposed to have the job of tending door?" (49), which is equivalent to asking if there isn't a *janitor*. The impatient question *Quin mihi faenus redditur?*, Most. 575 ('Why isn't my interest being paid?') is rendered by "Won't my interest be paid?" (43). *Aedes festivissimae* (Curc. 93) is called "temple of joys" (40) with total disregard of the regular meaning of *aedes* in the plural. On page 43 *pistrinorum civitas* (Pers. 420) is translated by "you king of the treadmill". The reviewer knows of no baker's *treadmill* at Pompeii or elsewhere. 'You city-full of mills' would approximate the humor of exaggeration in the original.

On page 24 we find a surprising comment: "It is most unfortunate that we have lost Cicero's treatise De Gestu Histrionis". The reader is referred to Cicero Ad Att. 6.1.8. Turning to the passage indicated we find the following sentence:

⁷Mallery, Annual Report of the Bureau of Ethnology, 1879-1880, page 294.

⁸Compare, for instance, *orchestarum loquacissimae manus, linguisi digiti, silentium clamosum* (Cassiodorus, Var. 1.20); *manu puer loquaci* (Terentianus Maurus 246); etc.

⁹Jorio, La Mimica degli Antichi, Napoli, 1832, gives a number of cuts of Neapolitan gestures which resemble those of the ancients. The work is interesting and instructive, but the study was made with insufficient ancient data.

¹⁰Sittl, Gebarden der Griechen und Römer, is the most comprehensive collection we have, but it is by no means exhaustive.

Obx θλαθε σε illud de gestu histrionis, tu scelestus suspicaris, ego διελως scripsi.

Part of the note of Tyrrell and Purser reads thus:

Cicero had written something about the gesture of some actor. Atticus thought it was a hit at Hortensius, of whom Cicero says (Brut. 303) that his gestures were too artificial for an orator.

The omission from the thesis of a formal and imposing bibliography is, to say the least, unorthodox. Many books have been consulted, but the point of view and treatment are so independent that the omission seems justified. A compilation of works mentioned in the notes would create an unwarranted impression of indebtedness to 'Kultur'. Dr. Blancké's views are destined to shock our Teutonic brothers. What German authorities he does notice serve only as tempins to be summarily bowled over. On them he has scored a 'strike'.

Scholarship will feel indebted to this thesis not so much for ascertaining new facts as for calling attention to the frequency and scope of certain characteristics of Plautine drama and for systematizing and classifying them¹¹. The thesis should be accessible to all instructors teaching Latin comedy for the first time.

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EUGENE S. McCARTNEY.

The First Six Books of the Aeneid. Edited, with Introduction, Notes, Vocabulary, and Passages for Sight Translation, by Harry E. Burton. Boston: Silver, Burdett, and Company (1919). Pp. xx + 530.

A new edition of the Aeneid, to justify its existence, should exhibit some marked originality in treatment, or in interpretation, or in the 'aid and comfort' it affords to its enemy, the High School student. In the present work there is the usual Introduction, dealing with the life and works of Vergil, the story of the poem, and the structure of the verse. This information is condensed into twelve pages, and seems to set the pace for the make-up of the entire book. Of course the text itself admits of no condensation; but the Notes and the Vocabulary are condensed almost to tabloid form, so that this portion scarcely lives up to the aim announced in the Preface, "to supply all the material needed for the study of Latin poetry as it is ordinarily conducted in Secondary Schools". There are 179 pages of text, and but 183 pages of by no means closely printed notes and comment, so greatly needed by the novice in Latin poetry. The Notes, indeed, are valuable for many tasteful renderings of the text in passages more or less difficult, and they contain useful suggestion and explanation in places. But quantitatively they have approached the irreducible minimum, especially on the grammatical side. The beginner in the Aeneid is certainly very far from even a reasonable mastery of Latin syntax. He needs grammar, and plenty of it;

¹¹For this reason one is inclined to regret that more comprehensive lists of illustrative passages were not given in citation.

and he is very likely to regard the translation of many passages, however cleverly done, as obviating the necessity of effort. But the Notes to Book 1 give our raw recruit only 39 references to Latin Grammars; those to Book 5 and 6 give but seven each. There is also little or no discussion of the syntax of poetry, and its variations from that of prose, to which the pupil has hitherto been accustomed; nor is there any discussion of poetic diction.

In the sphere of interpretation it is gratifying to note that in 2.87 the editor suggests the possibility of supplying *belli* with *primis ab annis*, though he cannot entirely break away from the traditional interpretation which practically charges Vergil with inability to hold the thread of his discourse intact through four successive verses. Some curious inferences are drawn: for example, that *trahebat*, in 2.457, "suggests the child's effort to keep up with his mother". Why should it not rather suggest Andromache's habitual visits? This seems more natural and dignified than for a great epic to depict a princess inconsiderately dragging by the hand her reluctant or lagging son. So the interpretation of 3.607 seems forced and the language redundant; surely *suis* is to be understood with *genibus*. And, it may be asked, how does 6.409 make it "clear that Hercules, Theseus and Pirithous did not gain admission by means of the golden branch"? The verse would apply equally well if they had thus gained it.

An original and commendable feature is the grouping of illustrative material into an Appendix. The material is well chosen and fairly abundant; and, if well handled, it cannot fail to be enlightening and inspiring.

The Vocabulary appears to the reviewer thoroughly unsatisfactory. Not once in its entire compass is any light thrown on the etymology or the usage of a word. Surely a Vocabulary to a Secondary School classic has a wider function than to state brief and bare definitions. Value has been sacrificed to brevity. The value, moreover, of any Vocabulary to a School edition of the Aeneid would be multiplied many fold if it covered the entire poem. Such a Vocabulary would not be unduly large or bulky, for it is doubtful if the last six books contain more than 750 words, exclusive of proper names, not found in the first six.

The passages designed for sight reading seem open to serious objection. That the pupil may not be discouraged, such passages should be, in general, less difficult than the main text, and should possibly be limited to Vergil and Ovid. The very first passage given in this book, however, is from Lucretius, whose style is utterly un-Vergilian. Besides, in the 69 verses of Lucretius which are given there are 32 words which the pupil has never seen, and at least three which he has met but once. In the first selection from Catullus there are six new words in the first ten verses. And all

this is presented to the pupil without a single footnote of definition or suggestion. The meaning of some of these strange words the pupil of reasonable skill can derive; in connection with others he must wildly guess; in the case of still others he confronts an impasse. This is not an intellectually helpful situation.

The book is emphatically a teacher's book. In the hands of a competent and inspiring teacher it may prove of value; in the hands of the pupil the book will—in the opinion of the reviewer¹—scarcely achieve its purpose.

CENTRAL HIGH SCHOOL,
Philadelphia.

B. W. MITCHELL.

NEW YORK STATE TEACHERS' ASSOCIATION CLASSICAL SECTION: ANNUAL MEETING

The meeting of the Classical Section, New York State Teachers' Association, to which reference was made in THE CLASSICAL WEEKLY 13.32, will be held on Tuesday, November 25-26, at Albany, in the Lutheran Church, near the Ten Eyck Hotel.

Arrangements are being made for an informal luncheon, on Tuesday, in a near-by restaurant, The Gainsborough (75 cents per plate).

GEORGE D. KELLOGG, President.

The Classical Association of the Atlantic States First Fall Meeting: University of Pennsylvania, Saturday Morning, November 29

The First Fall Meeting of The Classical Association of the Atlantic States will be held as part of the regular annual meeting of The Association of Colleges and Preparatory Schools of the Middle States and Maryland, on the Saturday Morning after Thanksgiving, November 29, at 9.30, in the Architectural Building of the University of Pennsylvania. It is hoped that many members of the Association will be present, and that they will bring others with them.

The programme is as follows:

The Senatus Consultum Ultimum of 63 BC., by Professor Evan T. Sage, of the University of Pittsburgh.

Studies in the Catilinarian Orations, by Professor Charles Knapp, Barnard College.

Observations on the Cicero Answer-Books of The College Entrance Examination Board, by Professor Nelson Glenn McCrea, Columbia University.

There ought to be plenty of time for discussion, and there ought to be many ready to discuss the themes of these papers.

C. K.

¹A review of a text-book is, of necessity, largely an expression of the reviewer's opinion of its effectiveness with his own classes. That others may view the book here discussed in a very different way may be seen by examination of a review of it by Professor M. N. Wetmore, in The Classical Journal 15.59-61 (October, 1919).

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